

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An optical connector, comprising:
  - a probe comprising a rigid support encasing an optical fiber
  - a receptacle formed from a material softer than said rigid support, said receptacle comprising an opening to receive said probe; and
  - a sleeve lining an inner wall of said opening.
2. The optical connector as recited in claim 1 wherein said sleeve is substantially cylindrical in shape and has a C-shaped cross section.
3. The optical connector as recited in claim 2 wherein said sleeve comprises one of a ceramic and a metal.
4. The optical connector as recited in claim 2 wherein said sleeve comprises brass.
5. The optical connector as recited in claim 3 wherein said connector comprises one of an SC connector and an LC connector.
6. The optical connector as recited in claim 5 wherein said sleeve is a press-fit sleeve.

7. The optical connector as recited in claim 3 wherein said receptacle comprises injection molded plastic.

8. The optical connector as recited in claim 7 wherein said injection molded plastic comprises polyetherimide (PEI).

9. A method for fortifying an optical connector, comprising:

encasing a fiber optic within a rigid probe;

forming a receptacle with a plastic having an opening to receive said rigid probe; and

fitting a sleeve within said opening to protect said plastic from said rigid probe.

10. The method as recited in claim 10 further comprising:

forming said sleeve having a substantially cylindrical shape and having a C-shaped cross section with a gap along one side.

11. The method as recited in claim 10 wherein said fitting comprises:

compressing said sleeve to close said gap; and

pressing said sleeve into said opening.

12. The method as recited in claim 11 wherein said sleeve comprises one of a metal and a ceramic.

13. The method as recited in claim 11 wherein said sleeve comprises brass.
14. The method as recited in claim 11 further comprising:  
forming said receptacle from injection molded plastic.
15. The method as recited in claim 14 wherein said plastic comprises polyetherimide (PEI).
16. A small form factor (SFF) pluggable connector for an optical system, comprising:  
a male plug comprising a fiber optic encased in a rigid probe;  
one of an SC and LC female receptacle formed from injection molded plastic, said receptacle comprising an opening to receive said probe; and  
a press fitted sleeve lining an inner wall of said opening to protect said injection molded plastic from direct contact with probe.
17. A SSF pluggable connector as recited in claim 16, wherein said injection molded plastic comprises polyetherimide (PEI).
18. A SSF pluggable connector as recited in claim 16 wherein said press fitted sleeve comprises a generally cylindrical in shape having a C-shaped cross section.

19. A SSF pluggable connector as recited in claim 16 wherein said press fitted sleeve comprises one of a metal and a ceramic.

20. A SSF pluggable connector as recited in claim 16 wherein said press fitted sleeve comprises brass.